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General and complete disarmament: taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations

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Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 67/56 of 3 December 2012, 68/46 of 5 December 2013, 69/41 of 2 December 2014 and 70/33 of 7 December 2015 on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons,

Deeply concerned about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons,

Deeply concerned also about the risks related to the existence of nuclear weapons,

Recalling the Declaration of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament,[1] in which it is stated, inter alia, that all the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations, and that all States have the right to participate in disarmament negotiations,

Reaffirming the role and functions of the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission, as set out in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly,[2]

[1] Resolution S-10/2, sect. II.
[2] Ibid., sect. IV.

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Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3] in which it is stated, inter alia, that responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally and that, as the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role,

Welcoming the efforts by Member States to secure progress in multilateral disarmament and the support of the Secretary-General for such efforts, and recalling in this regard the Secretary-General's five-point proposal on nuclear disarmament,

Recalling that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,[4] which serves as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, was negotiated considering the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war and to take measures to safeguard the security of peoples,

Recalling also the obligations of States parties to the Treaty and their commitments as reflected in the outcome documents of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,[5] of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty[6] and of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty,[7]

Stressing the importance of the full and effective implementation by the States parties to the Treaty of the various commitments made at the review conferences,

Reaffirming the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, and determined to promote multilateralism as an essential way to develop arms regulation and disarmament negotiations,

Mindful of the absence of concrete outcomes of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations within the United Nations framework for two decades, and mindful also of the obligation of States to engage in negotiations in good faith on effective measures towards nuclear disarmament,

Recognizing that the current international climate makes increased political attention to disarmament and non-proliferation issues, the promotion of multilateral disarmament and the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons all the more urgent,

Welcoming the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, held on 26 September 2013 pursuant to its resolution 67/39 of 3 December 2012, which highlighted the wish of the international community for progress in this field, and noting its resolution 68/32 of 5 December 2013 as a follow-up to this meeting,

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[3] Resolution 55/2.

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

[5] *1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I* (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I) and Corr.2).

[6] *2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document*, vols. I-III (NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I-IV)).

[7] *2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document*, vols. I-III (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vols. I-III)).

Welcoming also the report on the work of the Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, submitted pursuant to its resolution 67/56[8] and referenced in its resolution 68/46, and noting with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to its resolution 68/46,[9] containing the views of Member States on how to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, including the steps that Member States have already taken to that end,

Welcoming further the efforts by all Member States, international organizations and civil society to continue to enrich the discussions on how to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations in the United Nations bodies in which disarmament and peace and security are addressed,

Bearing in mind that a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons would be an important contribution towards comprehensive nuclear disarmament,

Bearing in mind also that additional measures, both practical and legally binding, for the irreversible, verifiable and transparent destruction of nuclear weapons would be needed in order to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons,

Stressing the importance of inclusiveness, and welcoming the participation of all Member States in the efforts to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world,

Emphasizing the importance and urgency of securing substantive progress on priority nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues,

Mindful of Article 11 of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the functions and powers of the General Assembly to consider and make recommendations with regard to, inter alia, disarmament,

1. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, established by the General Assembly by its resolution 70/33, which met in Geneva during 2016, engaged in structured and substantive discussions in a comprehensive, inclusive, interactive and constructive manner;

2. *Welcomes* the report of the Working Group established by the General Assembly by its resolution 70/33;[10]

3. *Recognizes* the value of the participation and contribution of international organizations and civil society to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, as demonstrated during the work of the Working Group;

4. *Reiterates* that the universal objective of taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations remains the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, and emphasizes the importance of addressing issues related to nuclear weapons in a comprehensive, inclusive, interactive and constructive manner, for the advancement of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations;

[8] A/68/514.
[9] A/69/154 and Add.1.
[10] A/71/371.

5. *Reaffirms* the urgency of securing substantive progress in multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations;

6. *Recommends* that additional efforts can and should be pursued to elaborate concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons, reaffirms the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons[4] and the commitments made therein, and considers that the pursuit of any such measures, provisions and norms should complement and strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, including the three pillars of the Treaty;

7. *Also recommends* that States consider implementing, as appropriate, the various measures suggested in the report of the Working Group that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, including but not limited to transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons, measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations, additional measures to increase awareness and understanding of the complexity of and interrelationship between the wide range of humanitarian consequences that would result from any nuclear detonation and other measures that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations;

8. *Decides* to convene in 2017 a United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination;

9. *Encourages* all Member States to participate in the conference;

10. *Decides* that the conference shall convene in New York, under the rules of procedure of the General Assembly unless otherwise agreed by the conference, from 27 to 31 March and from 15 June to 7 July 2017, with the participation and contribution of international organizations and civil society representatives;

11. *Also decides* that the conference will hold a one-day organizational session in New York as soon as possible;

12. *Calls upon* States participating in the conference to make their best endeavours to conclude as soon as possible a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination;

13. *Decides* that the conference shall submit a report on its progress to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, which will assess the progress made in the negotiations and decide the way forward;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the support necessary to convene the conference and to transmit the report of the conference to the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission and to the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament foreseen in paragraph 6 of resolution 68/32;

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, under the item entitled "General and complete disarmament", the sub-item entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations".